

Calvin Howell

03-15
RECEIVED**From:** ron [ron@menold.us]**Sent:** Monday, November 29, 2004 8:09 AM**To:** Michael Powell**Cc:** Kathleen Abernathy; Michael Copps; KJMWEB; Jonathan Adelstein**Subject:** Satellite & Cable Charges for DTV-HD

DEC 22 2004

Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary**RECEIVED**

DEC 28 2004

MEDIA BUREAUFederal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Dear Chairman Powell,

I am writing to you so I can share my views and represent other US citizens across the nation. The Satellite and Cable media companies are levying large fees for DTV broadcasts. This additional charge being imposed on all America will be a major stumbling block for those on fixed incomes and minimum wage earners. American' consumers are being exploited by the satellite and cable media companies providing DTV-HD without price controls.

Whether you have Cable or Satellite you are going to pay more for HDTV services.

The Satellite networks are charging \$9.99 extra, and the cable companies are charging \$20.00 for Digital TV above the basic cost. By the way, cable is not offering HD programming in my area of (central Florida). It may be years before all various cable companies throughout America upgrade their equipment in rural areas. This is very upsetting not only to seniors but all over America. The FCC cannot police all these Cable companies with what little manpower they have. The OTA over the air programming in my area is to far away and Home owner associations prohibit TV antennas as most of them are all cable ready Communities. We are stuck between both FCC and HOA rules and regulations that homeowner associations are not willing to abide. Lawsuits are out of the question!

Within the next ten years we'll soon loose the old analog broadcast replaced with DTV signals. How do you expect over 80 million plus seniors going to factor this into their retirement incomes? Even the Boomers will suffer the higher costs. I am not complaining about the new HDTV Sets CRT, LCD, or Plasma technology. We will always experience new electronic products. The prices, like other electronic technology, will come down and be affordable to most over time. I predict that many HDTV sets will sit on company show room floors for a long time. Only those that can afford it will buy. As seen on amazon.com many used HDTV sets are marked down considerably are not selling.

I know we need some controls on satellite and cable companies to maintain price stability for DTV service. Why are the Cable companies allowed to charge \$20 dollars vs. \$10 dollars for satellite companies? I want HDTV just like many others but, I am not willing to pay the extra cost just because DTV will replace an older technology. Once the DTV is in place are we still going to pay the extra fees? The FCC HDTV Consumer Educations initiative (DTV- Get-it) may seem to us another piece of paper across your desk. To us it is real dollars to subscribe to DTV-HD programming. Many of us will never convert to HDTV because of the price gouging as explained above and just plain demographics. Transitioning out of the analog format will free up more resources for media giants and they will find other ways to tax the American consumer.

Mr. Chairman this needs to be addressed now, not when the future analog broadcast is shut down. It took two decades for our government / industry bodies that fought so hard for this new technology. I was one of them, fighting for this digital technology while serving the National Communications System. How about fighting for all Americans that cannot and will not be able to afford this new HDTV

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broadcast technology.

Please provide your response!

Ron Menold
Retired on fixed income